

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 20, 2007

AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 19, 2007

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 12, 2007

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 29, 2007

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2007–08 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 611

Introduced by Assembly Member Nakanishi
(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bass, Berg, Fuller, and Maze)
(Coauthor: Senator Ridley-Thomas)

February 21, 2007

An act to amend Section 3523 of the Business and Professions Code, and to add Article 6 (commencing with Section 128559) to Chapter 5 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to physician assistants.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 611, as amended, Nakanishi. Physician assistants: educational loan program.

Existing law, the Physician Assistant Practice Act, establishes the Physician Assistant Committee of the Medical Board of California. Under existing law, the committee licenses physician assistants under the name of the board and regulates the practice of physician assistants.

Existing law requires the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development to establish a nonprofit public benefit corporation known as the Health Professions Education Foundation to perform various duties with respect to implementing health professions scholarship and loan ~~program~~ *programs*.

This bill would create the California Physician Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program within the foundation to provide scholarships to physician assistant students and to repay qualifying educational loans of physician assistants who practice in medically underserved areas of the state and in specified clinics. The bill would establish the California Physician Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program Fund in the State Treasury and would make its revenue available for expenditure for the program upon appropriation by the Legislature. The bill would direct the deposit of voluntary contributions made by a physician assistant upon renewal of his or her license into the fund. The bill would require the foundation to report to the Legislature on the program, as specified. The bill would make implementation of the program contingent upon sufficient revenue being available in the fund for those purposes.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 3523 of the Business and Professions
- 2 Code is amended to read:
- 3 3523. (a) (1) All physician assistant licenses shall expire at
- 4 12 midnight of the last day of the birth month of the licensee during
- 5 the second year of a two-year term if not renewed.
- 6 (2) The committee shall establish by regulation procedures for
- 7 the administration of a birthdate renewal program, including, but
- 8 not limited to, the establishment of a system of staggered license
- 9 expiration dates and a pro rata formula for the payment of renewal
- 10 fees by physician assistants affected by the implementation of the
- 11 program.
- 12 (b) To renew an unexpired license, the licensee shall, on or
- 13 before the date of expiration of the license, apply for renewal on
- 14 a form provided by the committee, accompanied by the prescribed
- 15 renewal fee.
- 16 (c) At the time of renewing a physician assistant license, the
- 17 licensee may make a voluntary contribution of twenty-five dollars
- 18 (\$25) *or more* to the board for the sole purpose of funding the
- 19 California Physician Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment
- 20 Program established pursuant to Article 2.8 (commencing with
- 21 Section 127950) of Chapter 2 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the

1 Health and Safety Code. The board shall transmit the contribution
2 submitted pursuant to this subdivision for deposit in the California
3 Physician Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program
4 Fund established pursuant to Section 127952 of the Health and
5 Safety Code.

6 SEC. 2. Article 6 (commencing with Section 128559) is added
7 to Chapter 5 of Part 3 of Division 107 of the Health and Safety
8 Code, to read:

9
10 Article 6. California Physician Assistant Scholarship and Loan
11 Repayment Program
12

13 128559. (a) There is hereby established, in the Health
14 Professions Education Foundation, the California Physician
15 Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program, referred to
16 as the program for purposes of this article. The program shall
17 provide scholarships to pay for the educational expenses of students
18 enrolled in physician assistant schools and to repay qualifying
19 educational loans of physician assistants who agree to practice in
20 designated medically underserved areas as provided in this article.

21 (b) The Health Professions Education Foundation may also
22 provide scholarships and loan repayments for physician assistants
23 who practice in a clinic licensed pursuant to subdivision (a) of
24 Section 1204.

25 128559.1. (a) The Health Professions Education Foundation
26 shall administer the program utilizing the same general guidelines
27 applicable to the federal National Health Service Corps Scholarship
28 Program established pursuant to Section 254I of Title 42 of the
29 United States Code and the National Health Service Corps Loan
30 Repayment Program established pursuant to Section 254I-1 of
31 Title 42 of the United States Code, with the following exceptions:

32 (1) A physician assistant student shall be eligible to participate
33 in the program if he or she agrees to practice at a site located in
34 an area of the state where unmet priority needs exist for primary
35 care family physicians, as determined by the Health Workforce
36 Policy Commission.

37 (2) No matching funds shall be required from an entity in the
38 practice site area.

39 (b) The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development
40 shall adopt regulations regarding the implementation of the

1 program, upon recommendations made by the Health Professions
2 Education Foundation.

3 (c) In making recommendations regarding the implementation
4 of the program and during the development of the program, the
5 Health Professions Education Foundation shall solicit advice from
6 representatives of the Physician Assistants Committee and the
7 California Academy of Physician Assistants.

8 128559.2. (a) The California Physician Assistant Scholarship
9 and Loan Repayment Program Fund is hereby established in the
10 State Treasury.

11 (b) Revenues from the contributions made pursuant to Section
12 3523 of the Business and Professions Code, as well as any other
13 private or public funds made available for purposes of the program,
14 shall be deposited into the fund. Upon appropriation by the
15 Legislature, moneys in the fund shall be available for expenditure
16 by the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development for
17 purposes of implementing the program pursuant to this article.

18 (c) The Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development
19 and the Health Professions Education Foundation shall be under
20 no obligation to administer the program under this article until
21 sufficient moneys have been accumulated in the fund and
22 appropriated to the office by the Legislature.

23 128559.3. The Health Professions Education Foundation shall
24 submit a report to the Legislature on or before January 1, 2009,
25 and annually thereafter, that describes the experience of the
26 program since its inception, evaluate its effectiveness in improving
27 access to health care for underserved populations, and make
28 recommendations for maintaining or expanding its operation. The
29 report shall also include the following data:

30 (a) The number of the participants in the program.

31 (b) The locations where the participants practice or attend
32 school.

33 (c) The amount expended for the program's operation and the
34 amount collected in donations for the program.

35 128559.4. This article shall be implemented only to the extent
36 that sufficient moneys are available in the California Physician
37 Assistant Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program Fund to
38 administer the program.

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